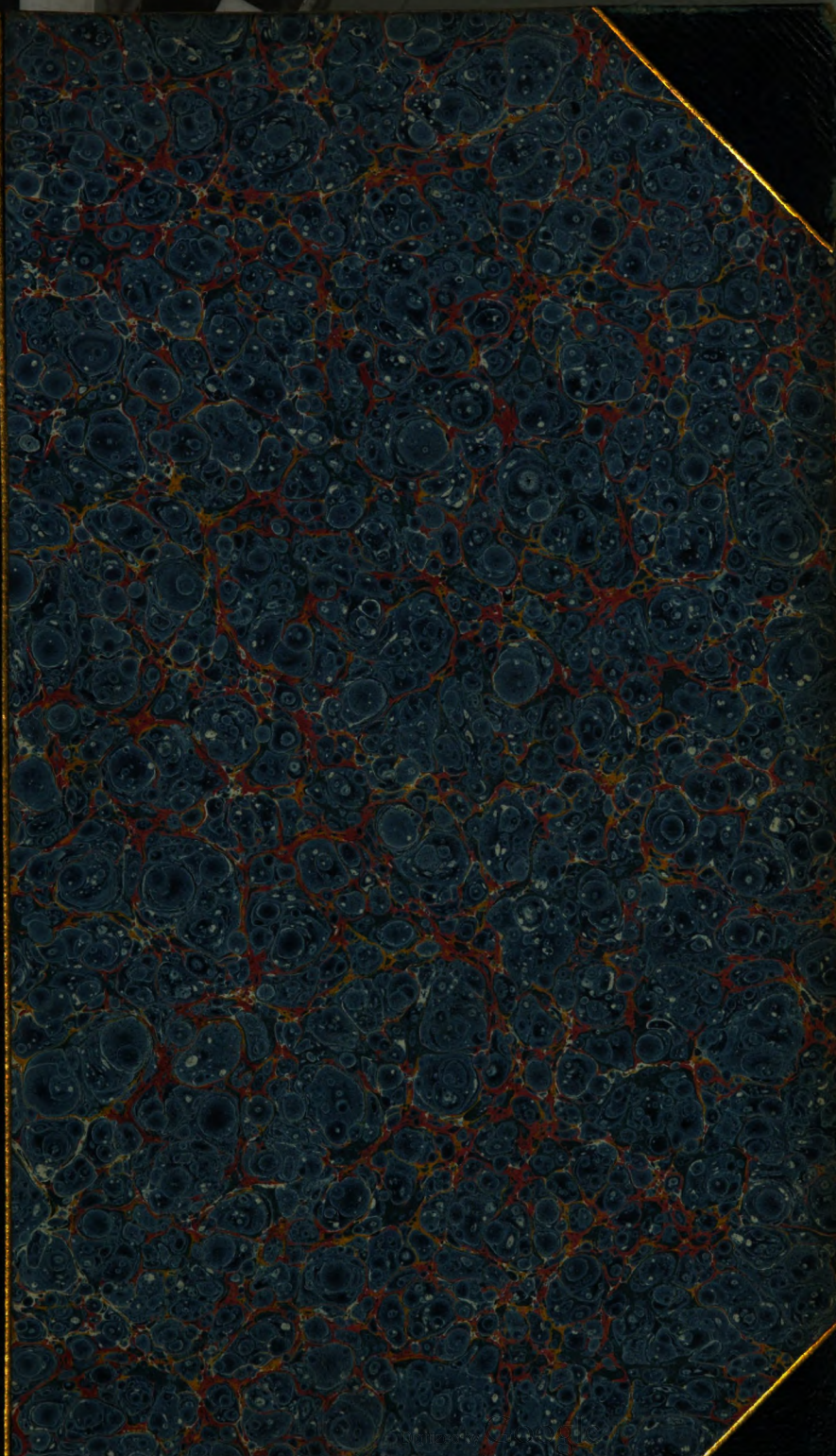


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REASONS

FOR SUBMITTING TO

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH,

BY R. K. SCÖNCE, B.A., OXON.,

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"DUM VOS PARENTUM ERROREM COLENTES STUDIOSE DEFENDITIS, HEREDES
SCELERIS ESSE VOLUNTIS, CUM FILII PACIS VEL SERO ESSE POSSETIS." —
ST. OPTATUS, II., 5.

Published in accordance with a very generally-expressed wish among
members of the Church of England.

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1848.



“ Time is short, eternity is long. Put not from you what you have found ; regard it not as mere matter of present controversy ; set not out resolved to refute it, and looking about for the best way of doing so ; seduce not yourself with the imagination that it comes of disappointment, or disgust, or restlessness, or wounded feeling, or undue sensibility, or other weakness. Wrap not yourself round with the associations of the past ; nor determine that to be truth which you wish to be so ; nor make an idol of cherished anticipations, Time is short, eternity is long.”—Essay on Development.



ERRATUM — In the fourteenth line of the tenth page, for *infallible* read *intelligible*.

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REASONS, &c.

THE great reluctance I have felt to emerge from the privacy into which I believed it to be my duty to retire, when I submitted to the Catholic Church, must be my apology for so long disregarding a wish, which is said to be very general, that I should publish my reasons for the step I have taken. There are some, however, among the persons who have expressed the wish, who have a *right* to question me :—I mean those who attended my ministry at St. Andrew's Church, and whose minds have been more or less unsettled by finding that one whom they trusted and revered has suddenly fallen, as they must suppose, into grievous error. For their sake I have determined to put aside my own private feelings, and to publish an account of the grounds on which I acted.

Twenty years ago the members of the English establishment were, in the mass, ultra-Protestants. In the course, however, of God's good Providence, there began a Catholic "movement";—a movement, the effects of which, in their rapid spread and awakening power, were almost miraculous; and, as it went on, numbers, who, a few years before, knew nothing of the Visible Church, or the efficacy of the Sacraments, or the Apostolical Suc-

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cession, or even of the necessity of strict obedience and self-discipline, found themselves holding deep in their hearts, as of the very substance of evangelic truth, not only these doctrines, but many other Catholic verities intimately connected with them. It was by the leading human instruments in this movement that I was myself brought to a sense of the deep importance of religious truth, and of the necessity of a holy life. With those leading men, and with hundreds of others, well known for deep piety and great learning, I went on, gradually adopting one Catholic truth after another, as each seemed to harmonise beautifully with those which were already realized ; not *changing* my views (for that I have *never* done from the first), but simply adding to them fresh ideas, as the truths before received were developed in their full proportions. While I conceived that the English Church was a branch of the Catholic Church, and that I could consistently hold what I did hold in her communion, I continued to officiate as a clergyman ; nor did I suffer mere *doubts* about her position to prevent my officiating. As long as I had any prospect of settling those doubts in her favour, I considered myself bound to go on with my work, and my Bishop thought so too. As soon as ever the doubts ceased, and yielded to conviction on the Catholic side, without a day's delay I resigned my office ;—and I desire here to express my opinion, that the Bishop of Sydney acted with faithfulness and decision in discharging his duty to the Church, as well as with marked kindness to myself as a

personal friend. Though he did long know of my doubts, he did *not* know the extent to which they had carried me—and I am persuaded that he was as much surprised as any one, at what he conceived to be my *sudden* decision.

Sudden, however, it was not, in any other sense than as the overflowing of a cup is sudden when the last drop is added. It was the natural and legitimate termination of a long course of steady progress. At the very outset of the movement, doctrines, which had been universally esteemed Roman, and which still are so esteemed by the majority of Anglicans, were recognized as truths of the Gospel ; and thus, much of the supposed corruption which had kept us aloof from our “sister”-church of Rome, as we learned to call her, ceased to exist in our eyes. The study of Catholic Theology, and the use of Catholic devotions, “adapted to the English Church,” became natural to those who were led to love the whole household of faith, and to yearn for a restoration of Christian unity. The unhappy separation of our Church from the rest of Christendom pressed itself more and more painfully upon our notice, as our Catholic sympathies were cherished ; and, as we sifted deeply the causes of our separation, and looked at Rome as she really *is*, not as she has been caricatured by controversialists, misgivings were gradually awakened in our hearts as to the effects of the fearful act of schism which is called the Reformation.

Up to this point I think all those who followed

the movement were carried. At any rate, they were carried so far that they *would* have had the misgivings I speak of, if it had not been that the conversion of some of the leading Divines of their school gave them a shock, which occasioned a reaction. They recoiled—some, it may be, to retrace all their steps, and revert to the ultra-Protestantism in which they were originally nurtured—others, as we fervently hope, only for a time, that they may collect themselves, and gain strength for an impending struggle.

The movement went on, and the great and good men, to whom, as all allow, the Church of England was indebted under God more than to any others living, became Catholics—men holy in their lives, sound in judgment, familiar with controversy, learned in the Fathers. Hitherto Anglican “High Churchmen” had read their works reverently, and with such incalculable benefit to their own souls as to fill them with heartiest gratitude. They had *moved* on steadily and consistently. Step by step the teachers and the learners had advanced in Catholic truth—unconsciously approaching that one visible fold to which the Holy Spirit was guiding them. At length the leading men, the best and the wisest—and with them, sooner or later, as grace was given them, many an humble follower—entered the gate of the Holy City. Such was the state of things two years before I became a Catholic; and it was this that led me to devote these two years to prayer and study, in order that I might not be influenced, on the one hand, solely by respect for

men, who might have erred in judgment—nor, on the other hand, be deterred from doing my duty, if those men really were appointed to be my guides, by mere reverence for a religion in which I happened to be born, or by the force of old associations, or by present interests and affections. In acting thus, I did what I was obviously bound to do. There *was* a time when I was not called to think about Rome. If we were right, all was well ; if we were wrong, we were wrong through ignorance rendered invincible by the circumstances of our education, and by the almost impenetrable veil of misrepresentation which hung between ourselves and the truth. But this time had passed by. *Now*, if we were right, still all was well ; but, *if we were wrong*, how *could* we, under circumstances so changed, hope to be forgiven on the ground of honesty of purpose, if, because of private feelings, or hereditary predilections, or national pride, or disinclination for argument, or fear of uneasiness, or *any* motive, we had refused to listen patiently to what those who had guided us hitherto so nobly, had to say in self-justification—if we had refused to listen to their defence of the step which, whether for life or death, they had taken themselves, and which they earnestly commended to us.

Thus much will suffice to shew why I began to study the nature of the Catholic religion. One whom I dearly loved warned me to refrain ; he esteemed such studies to be wrong, and in a published sermon, has declared my fall, as he counted it, to be a consequence of the “moral fault” I

committed in adopting this course. I can only say, I *did* think, and I *do* think it was a right course ; and I would commend the same, in God's name, to any of those who, having once listened to me as a minister of Christ, may still be willing to follow my advice. *They*, too, are in some measure called to the investigation as others are not called, and I know not what answer they will give at the Judgment Day, if they heedlessly turn from the subject.

The most prominent doctrine put forward by the Oxford Divines, and maintained more or less by all "High Churchmen," is, that *the Church is the Divine Interpreter of Scripture*. Even the XXXIX Articles say, "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith." What then is *meant* by the Church—What *is* the Church ? Where is her voice to be heard ? Is the Church of England the appointed guide ? The answer of "High Churchmen" would be,—She is so to Englishmen. Well, then, are not the churches of France, and Spain, and Italy, equally authorised in their respective countries ? The same "High Churchmen" would answer, undoubtedly. But then, unhappily, what one church teaches, the others condemn ; and therefore the theory cannot be a true one, for the Voice of God cannot contradict itself. Is there any greater "moral fault" in an Anglican thinking his church may be wrong, than in an Italian thinking *his* church may be wrong ?—(I mean according to the Anglican theory). It is manifest that the Church of England cannot pretend to claim more of authority than any other

national Church, and therefore she cannot be *the* Church which "has authority in controversies of faith." Gladly would I have believed that she *had* such authority, but she did not claim it, and the notion was so obviously absurd, that in spite of the charge of undutifulness which I incurred, I was compelled to reject it.

There was, however, another answer to our momentous question—The Church of *antiquity* is the authoritative Church. Here, too, I found difficulty; for in the first place, I saw no such promise in the Bible as that "I will be with you for three, four, or five hundred years." The words are plain enough. They are, "even unto the end of the world." I saw in the Bible that we were to "hear the Church," but there were no such words as "the Church of the first three centuries" in the sacred volume. I saw much about submitting to those who are placed over us in the Lord, but not a hint that this was to mean persons who lived 1500 years ago. Then again the theory seemed, in the main, quite unpractical. To the *poor*, especially, the Gospel is preached: are *they* to have recourse to antiquity? Is the ordinary Christian to remain in doubt as to whether one church or another is right, till he has read a hundred folios in Latin and Greek. Who would not be driven to the common Protestant notion of the "Bible and the Bible only" by so preposterous a doctrine? Still the Church of England bade me go to antiquity, and I did so; but instead of finding, in my studies, that

her divinity was sound, I found that the Theology of antiquity was essentially the same as that of the Church of Rome. I found that the living Catholic Church was, from the time of the Apostles downwards, the guide which all implicitly followed, and that the doctrines, branded as corruptions by the heretics of the present century, were taught as apostolical traditions. I saw no ground whatever for the belief, recently invented by Protestants, that the Bible is the sole rule of faith; I saw *every* ground for believing that the Church in communion with the See of St. Peter, on whom it was founded, was to be unhesitatingly followed. Here, then, was an infallible and practical answer to the question, what is the Church? It is that society which was founded by our Lord Jesus Christ himself upon St. Peter, against which the gates of hell should *never* prevail—the Church which was committed to the government of St. Peter and his successors—the Church which, as an undeniable historical fact, has ever been so governed, has ever been one, has ever taught one and the same doctrine—the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. This was the result of my reading, and of course I became a Catholic.

The answer to all this will be that I am mistaken in my facts. I can only say I have done my best to avoid mistakes, and I am ready to shew to any one who desires it, that I have good reason on my side. But what I would urge here is this—that no one has any right to charge me with being mis-

taken, who has not followed the same course of study ; seeing that for every *one* good and able man who has arrived at an opposite conclusion, I can produce a hundred equally good and equally able men who are on my side. To believe the Church of England to be right, because a few fallible men, however good or learned, say so, is to follow blindly an unauthorised guidance ; and I am prepared to shew that the very best among these men, such, for instance, as Archbishop Laud, has been led by strong prejudice to misrepresent, in a very grievous manner, the testimony of antiquity. To persons, however, who are totally unable to enter into such questions, I would point out what they see before them. There *is* a Church in the world, teaching in every nation under Heaven one and the same thing, claiming their allegiance as the Church founded by our Lord, called by all sects the Catholic Church, and governed by the Bishop of Rome, who is admitted to be historically the successor of him to whom Christ said “Feed my sheep.” The only other Church claiming obedience, *as* a Church, is the Church of England. She does *not* teach one and the same thing, for everybody in Sydney knows that at Christ Church and St. Andrew’s one doctrine was taught, at St. James’s another, at St. Philip’s a third ; she is *not* called the Catholic Church, though her members profess their belief in such a church every time they say the Apostles’ creed ; she is not in communion with him on whose prede-

cessor the Church was founded ; and she is historically known to have broken off from the rest of Christendom, mainly at the instigation of a profligate King.

My sincere hope is that the unreasonableness and inconsistency of "High Church" principles will soon be generally apparent, and then those who are Catholics at heart, those who feel the need of a living guide, those who read in Scripture that there *is* such a guide, will hasten to the one fold of the only true Christian Church. Prophecy describes that one fold in plain terms, and the New Testament declares, in terms as plain, that the Christian Church fulfils the prophecy. We accordingly believe in *one* Holy Catholic Church. *Are* the Churches of Rome and England one ? Is there any Church that can pretend to be that one Church but the Church in communion with the Bishop of Rome ? If there is any reality in that article of the Apostles' Creed, two Churches strongly opposed to each other cannot be meant by it. We must choose between the Church of St. Peter and that of Henry VIII. The Oxford theology, which has attempted to solve the difficulty, has been tried, and is found wanting. The "Via Media" is losing its supporters one by one. The cloudy theory of High Church Divinity has proved to be what Carlyle calls "a sham," and men are choosing their side. They *must* be either Catholics or Protestants. They cannot continue any longer half one and half the other. Their theology is ingenious, and looks well on

paper, but it is utterly unreal and unpractical ; and clergymen who, in the zealous discharge of their duties, find it necessary to reduce it to practice, must, sooner or later, be undeceived.

In saying this I shall have true Protestants on my side. They are right in calling "High-Churchmen" semi-Papists, and in declaring that Oxford theology leads to Rome. As for their own theory,—if, without any shadow of reason, they choose to believe that the Bible is the only word of God—that the inventor of printing was the chief apostle—or that the volume of Scriptures, arranged just as they stand, bound together, and bearing on their face the token of their Divinity, fell, as from the clouds, into their hands ;—if they believe that Christ's commission to the Apostles was, "go ye and write Scriptures, and I will be with *them* always, even unto the end of the world" ; if they choose to stake their salvation upon the inspiration of books, which, in the first three centuries, were not received as inspired ;—and are determined to admit a rule of faith which was invented in the fifteenth century, and which could not *possibly* be the rule until the age of printing ;—if they really think poor people are to be guided by Hebrew and Greek books, translated by persons who interpret them as they individually please ;—and if they imagine the whole world can understand what St. Peter said was hard to be understood ;—all I can say is, their credulity is amazing. To *them* I have nothing to say. They advocate the right of private judgment, and

cannot consistently censure me for exercising mine. It is to those who were more immediately connected with myself that I am appealing, and I do hope that what I have said will induce them to *think*.

I would beg them not to put aside the question under a mere impulse, as if Catholics were *obviously* wrong. It is true they think so, but *why* do they think so? Because they have, from their childhood, held what is untrue, namely, that the Bible is the *only* Word of God. This they have taken for granted, and then when the Church teaches things not on the surface of the Bible, they think this at once sets aside her claim. It is said she teaches things *against* the Bible. Of course we deny it most strenuously. But let us put a parallel case :—The Canon of Scripture was not established fully till the fourth century. Supposing, then, that men had to settle the question whether St. James' Epistle was a part of the Word of God, would it have been decisive against the claims of that book to say "it is opposed to St. Paul's Epistles." Yet it *is* so, at the first blush—at least in the eyes of Protestants. So the Church's Word is (to Protestants), at the first blush, opposed to Scripture; but it is the undoubted Word of God nevertheless, and when men search deeply they find that, instead of being opposed to the written Word, it is thoroughly and beautifully consistent with it. The fact, however, which I would press upon those who, in an off-hand way, sneer at the Catholic Church, is *this*, that, according to her

doctrine, and the doctrine of antiquity, and the doctrine of Scripture itself, the voice of the Church is as much the Word of God as the voice of the Bible.

That Protestants do receive any portion of God's Word, that they admit the Christian Scriptures while they reject the Christian Church, is a happy inconsistency ;—for, doubtless the Sacred Volume, desecrated though it be by the great bulk of those among whom it is scattered by Bible Societies, will guide all who earnestly search its pages for the truth, into the fold of the Church. Catholics are the truest “Bible Christians.” Where but among Catholics can be found, in any numbers, men and women whose lives are wholly given to God—who sell all that they have and give to the poor—who forsake all and follow Christ—whose prayers, and fastings, and watchings, are such as the Scriptures prescribe? “If the truth must be spoken,” it was said four years ago in a Protestant pulpit, “what are the humble monk, and the holy nun, and other regulars, as they are called, but Christians, after the very pattern given us in Scripture? What have they done but this,—continue in the world the Christianity of the Bible? Did our Saviour come on earth suddenly as He will one day visit, in whom would He see the features of the Christians He and his Apostles left behind them, but in them? Who but these give up home and friends, wealth and ease, good name and liberty of will, for the Kingdom of Heaven? Where shall we find the

image of St. Paul, or St. Peter, or St. John, or of Mary the mother of Mark, or of Philip's daughters, but in those who, whether they remain in seclusion or are sent over the earth, have calm faces and sweet plaintive voices, and spare frames, and gentle manners, and hearts weaned from the world, and wills subdued ; and for their meekness, meet with insult, and for their purity with slander, and for their gravity with suspicion, and for their courage with cruelty ; yet meet with Christ everywhere—Christ their all-sufficient, everlasting portion, to make up to them, both here and hereafter, all they suffer, all they dare for His Name's sake?" Any one who has thought it worth while to ascertain the practical working of the Catholic system, would be compelled to acknowledge, that in spite of all their supposed corruptions of doctrine, Catholics are infinitely more like Bible Christians in their *lives* than any other people in the world. In the week just past, had a Protestant looked in at St. Mary's, at six in the morning, he would have seen, day after day, some 1500 souls gathered round their Bishop in preparation for their Paschal Communion ; and every day in the year he would see devoutly kneeling on their knees, at early prayer, about 400 worshippers. If he were not afraid to pause within the walls of the Church, and listened to the voice of him who leads the spiritual exercises, he would hear no declamation, no exciting bursts of popular eloquence, but a solemn, searching, and minutely-practical direction about

the duties and dangers of each man's daily life.—The honest exclamation of one who witnessed the striking scene for the first time would be, "If this be not Bible-Christianity, I know not where to find it: here indeed is the Gospel preached to the poor, and here, and here only, do the poor look as if they cared to hear it. The proper effect of such a sight with a sincere seeker for truth, would be this.—He would go away with a load of prejudice removed; and he would open his Bible with the feeling that as Catholics have undoubtedly realised most thoroughly its *precepts*, so it is just possible they may know most about its *doctrines*; and as the one of all others most important is that which we have stated—viz., that the Church speaks the word of God, as well as the Bible, he would determine to ascertain whether in that *written* word anything was said upon this fundamental question;—which the Bible says most about, the Church, or itself;—which is, according to the Scriptures, to be regarded as the living and paramount teacher of Divine Truth. I would suggest then the following considerations.

The texts usually adduced to prove that the Bible is the only divinely-appointed guide, are as follows:

I. John, v. 39. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me.

II. 2 Tim., iii. 15—17. From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for

correction, for instruction in righteousness : that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

III. Acts, xvii. 11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so.

I. This text may be translated, “*ye* search the Scriptures,” but if it be, according to the common rendering, a command, it was spoken before a word of the New Testament was written, and it was addressed to the *Jews*, bidding them to examine well the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, which spake of Christ. Undoubtedly the Old Testament, duly searched, would lead a Jew to recognize our blessed Lord as the expected Messias. And this is all that *need* be signified by the text. But if it does imply more than this, and is meant as a precept to Christians, what then? Would an injunction to “search the Gospels” imply that we are not to search the Epistles? Assuredly not. And neither does the duty of reading the Bible interfere with the other duty of hearing the Church. We too would say to Protestants the same holy words, “Search the Scriptures,” we pray you, for these are they which testify of the Church as well as of her Head—of the Kingdom as well as of its Lord—of the Bride as well as of the Bridegroom.

II. What Scriptures had Timothy known “from a child”? Of course the Old Testament. If these were able to make him wise unto salvation without anything else, what need had he of the New Testament? If, on the other hand, the Scriptures here

alluded to were *not* sufficient, the text cannot prove that they would be *made* sufficient by the addition of others. They were able to make the Jews wise unto salvation, because they pointed to Christ, and to the Church which He was to establish on earth. They made Timothy wise, because they gave him faith in Christ Jesus, who said to his Church, "Teach all nations." "All Scripture" means *every writing*. Is this literally true? And if every writing is not given by inspiration of God, how are Christians to know what are given, and what are not? The Bible nowhere tells us this. It nowhere speaks of itself. It consists of a number of detached writings collected together by men. We cannot therefore be assured of their inspiration, unless the men, to whom we owe them, had authority from God.

But even if this *were* known—even if the Apostles had said, such and such books constitute the Bible, and the Bible is that which our Lord has bidden us to disseminate over the whole world, as "profitable for salvation," and conducive to the perfection of a man of God—even supposing the same things had been said by St. Paul of the New Testament which he said of the Old—still how could we gather from this that there was no *other* source of knowledge—that the Scriptures are *sufficient*? I repeat there is not one syllable in the inspired writings to tell us either what the Bible is, or that it is the sole rule of faith. It is strange indeed that the fundamental principle of Protestantism has not one word of Scriptural support.

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The latter part of this passage merely asserts what we all believe, that Scripture conduces to the perfection of man, and throughly furnishes him with the precepts of a holy life.

III. Here, too, the Old Testament is intended, so that, if it were an argument for sufficiency at all, it would imply that the New Testament was an unwarrantable addition. It has, however, in fact, nothing to do with the rule of faith. It does but bear witness to the piety of the Bereans, who, in their anxious expectation of the Messias, were diligent in the study of the prophecies relating to His advent.

And now we will contrast with these testimonies relating to *one* part of God's Word, those which establish the authority of the *other* part—the *unwritten* Word.

Matt. xxviii. 18—20. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway *even unto the end of the world*.

John xx. 21—23. As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you; and when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.

2. Tim. i. 14. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. ii. 2—And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

2. Thess. ii. 15. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the *traditions* which ye have been taught, *whether by word, or our epistle* —iii. 6. Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the *tradition* which he received of us. 1. Cor. xi. 2. Keep the *traditions* as I delivered them to you.

2. Peter iii. 1, 2. This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you ; in both which I stir up your pure minds *by way of remembrance*: that ye may be *mindful . . . of the commandment of us the Apostles* of the Lord and Saviour.

1. John, ii. 24. Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

1. Cor. xi. 16. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God. Verse 34. The rest will I set in order when I come.

2. John 12. Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink : but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face.

John xiv. 16, 17, 18. " And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, *that He may abide with you for ever.*— The Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him, but ye shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans." verse 26. "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you."

1. Tim. iii. 15. The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth.

Matt, xviii. 15. If he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

It is hardly possible to conceive that any one would, in the exercise of private judgment, conclude from a comparison of these several passages

from the sacred volume, that the Bible, rather than the Church, is the appointed teacher of Christianity. Can any body read them and say there is the slightest Scriptural warrant for the newly-invented notion that a man is to make his private examination of the written Word his rule of faith? If the Acts of the Apostles were placed in the hands of a heathen, would he not at once exclaim, "Where are these Apostles or these representatives with whom Christ promised to be to the end of the world, and in whose fellowship and doctrine I am bidden to continue!" It is easy to say that no doubt oral teaching was the original way of imparting truth, and that it was changed three or four hundred years after Christ, when the Scriptures were gathered into a volume; but is it possible the Apostles knew anything of such a total revolution in the mode of teaching Gospel truth which was to take place in a future generation, and yet should be entirely silent about it? Does any Protestant really think St. Paul contemplated a time when the Bible was to become the sole rule of faith, and yet wrote in such a way as to lead his readers to a totally opposite conclusion; insomuch that it was reserved for Martin Luther to make the discovery? When we know then, as an historical fact, that there has been from the days of the Apostles until now a society professing to be the very society instituted by Christ, and claiming obedience and submission as His representative;—that there *is* such a society now, and *only one*, in

the world, will any candid man say there are not strong grounds for supposing this society to be identical with that on which our Lord conferred the privileges we read of in Scripture.

There is but one other subject to which I would draw the attention of my readers. I mentioned that my study of antiquity led me to recognize the necessity of being in communion with St. Peter's successor. The supremacy of the Bishop of Rome is, in my opinion, as fully set forth in the testimony of the Primitive Church as the truth of Christianity itself; but it would occupy too much space to give even a summary of such testimony here. I will content myself with the Scripture proof; and I am the more disposed to bring this forward in a pamphlet professing to contain my reasons (or rather some few of them) for becoming a Catholic, because I am conscious of having been very mainly influenced by it myself. It does appear to me much more obvious than the proof of Episcopacy, or Baptismal Regeneration, or the High Church Anglican doctrine of the Holy Eucharist; and, interpreted by *events*—by the subsequent history of the Church—it is, to my mind, absolutely irresistible.

SCRIPTURE PROOF OF ST. PETER'S PRIMACY.

I. *The Name.*

John i. 42. "And when Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation Peter," [*πέτρος*—in the Anglican translation, a "stone."

Why is the same word differently rendered in the following text?—Abraham was so named because he was to be father of many people; Peter was so named because in him was to be founded the multitude of the faithful.—Comp. Isaiah li. 1, 2. “Look unto the rock whence you are hewn—unto Abraham your father.”]

II. *The Promise.*

Matt. xvi. 16—19. “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God; and Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in Heaven; and I say unto thee, that thou art Peter (a “stone,” as above, or “a rock”), and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.” [Let it be remembered that though the power of binding and loosing was given to the Apostles, this gift of the Keys is peculiar to St. Peter. He *alone* received them, as he *alone* was called the rock, and he *alone* was bidden to take the government of the Church. And what the meaning of this gift was, may be gathered from Isaiah xxii, where the Lord, in committing the government of His house into the hand of Eliakim, son of Hilkiab, said, “And the *key* of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulders, so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open.” So in Rev. i. 18, when the supreme power of Christ is spoken of, he is said to have “the keys of death and hell.”—See also Rev. iii. 7.]

III. *The especial Gift.*

Luke xxii. 31, 32. “And the Lord said Simon Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have *you*, that he may sift *you* as wheat; but I have prayed for *THEE* that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” [This text follows immediately upon the exhortation to humility which our Lord had just addressed to the “Chief” of his Apostles, and the mention of Simon here by name shews that *he* was that chief.—See verse 26—“He that is

greatest among you, let him be as the younger ; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."]

IV. *The Primacy of rank held by anticipation during our Lord's earthly ministry.*

Matt. x. 2. " Now the names of the twelve Apostles are these : *the first*, Simon who is called Peter, &c. Mark iii. 16—Luke vi. 4—Mark i, 36 ; and *Simon and they that were with him* followed after Him."—Luke ix. 32. " But *Peter and they that were with him* were heavy with sleep." Matt. xvii. 27. " Go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up, and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money, that take and give unto them *for Me and thee*. At the same time came the Disciples unto Jesus, saying, who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven ?"

Luke v. 3. " And He entered into one of the ships which was Simon's"—verse 10—" and Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

Mark xvi. 7. Go your way, tell his Disciples, and Peter, that He goeth before you into Galilee."—Matt. viii. 14 ; xiv. 28, 29 ; xvii. 4 ; xix. 27 ; xxvi. 37, 40. Mark xi. 21. John vi. 68 ; xiii. 24, 36, &c., &c., &c.

V. *The Commission in fulfilment of the Promise.*

John xxi. 15—17. Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me *more than these* ? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas lovest thou Me ? He saith unto Him, yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto Him, Take the government of My sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me ? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time lovest thou Me, and he said unto Him, Lord Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus said unto him, Feed My sheep. [Our Lord used two words both of which in our translations are rendered "Feed." One however ought to be rendered as above, for that is its true meaning. Let any one read this striking passage two or three times, and then reflect whether any adequate significance is given to it in the Protestant system.]



VI. *The Primacy of Authority and Power after the Ascension.*

[No sooner had our Lord ascended than St. Peter takes His place, becomes His Vicar on earth ; and accordingly we find that, as in the Gospels the Evangelists relate the acts of *our Saviour* and His followers, so, in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke narrates the Acts of *St. Peter* and his followers—" *St. Peter and those that were with him.*" This he does as long as the book is strictly what it is called. Subsequently he enters upon a narrative of the voyages and travels of his own companion, St. Paul.]

Acts, i. 15, 22.

" In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said . . . one must be ordained."

Acts, ii. 14—41.

" Peter, standing up with the eleven, said, Ye men of Judæa, &c. When they heard this, they said unto Peter and the rest. . . . Then Peter said unto them, Repent, &c. Then they that gladly received *his* word were baptized. . . . 3000 souls.

Acts, iii. 1—26.

" Peter and John, &c. . . . A certain man lame asked alms, and Peter fastening his eyes upon him with John said, &c. Then Peter said . . . In the name of Jesus Christ . . . rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand . . . When Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, &c."

Acts, iv. 8.

" Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, &c."

Acts, v. 3, 10.

" Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart ? . . . Peter said . . . how is it that ye have offered, &c. And Ananias and his wife fell down and gave up the ghost."

Verse 15.

" They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them."

Verses 29—32.

"Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than man," &c.

Acts, viii. 20, 23.

"Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee," &c.

Acts, ix. 32, 43.

"As Peter passed throughout all quarters . . . Peter said unto him, Eneas, &c. . . Forasmuch as the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him, &c. . . Peter said, Tabitha, arise."

Acts, x. 1—48.

"An angel of God . . to Cornelius . . said, Call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter. . . Peter saw heaven opened, and he said of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons," &c. &c.

Acts, xi. 2—18.

"When Peter was come to Jerusalem . . he rehearsed the matter from the beginning . . . When they heard these things, they held their peace."

Acts xii. 5—19.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison ; but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church for him, &c., &c."

Acts, xv. 6.

"And the Apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter ; and when there had been much disputing Peter rose up and said, &c. Then all the multitude kept silence, and James answered, Simon hath declared, &c.

Now, if we reflect that the Acts of the Apostles is a mere record of events, not a statement of doctrines, we must, I think, see that it would be unreasonable to expect stronger evidence of St. Peter's authority and pre-eminence. No one can deny that St. Luke *does* give to St. Peter a *marked* pre-eminence. What is the reason of it? One class of interpreters answer out of their own head, "It is because of St. Peter's personal qualifications." Another class of interpreters answer out

of Holy Scripture, "It is because on him the Church is built; because to him the keys were given; because he was appointed to be the stay and prop of his brethren; because the care of the whole fold was solemnly entrusted to him."

Which answer is *prima facie* most likely to be true?

Can it be supposed for a moment that, after all the Apostles had received the Holy Ghost, and were endued with miraculous powers, any mere personal qualifications would give to *one* of that glorious company such distinction? Would not all such poor petty advantages be at once overwhelmed by the mighty dignity and glory and power poured forth upon *all* at Pentecost? Surely so far as *personal* weight and character went, Simon Zelotes would henceforth be equal to Simon Peter, to say nothing of the disciple whom Jesus loved, and to whom His blessed Mother was committed. Why then should a reason so utterly improbable be devised, when we have in the Gospels one that is at once clearly stated and eminently satisfactory? Why do men set up the foolishness of their own speculations against the plain Word of God?

ALL that I have attempted in this pamphlet is to shew that I *have* reasons for the part I have taken. I have given up a work wherein I took delight; I have changed the respect of men for the bitterest reproaches and insults; I have cut myself off

from those whom I dearly loved, and begun life anew—because these reasons were to me convincing. I did not act upon impulse, or under morbid feeling, or out of reverence for individual men, but simply because I was convinced.

In conclusion I have only to repeat that I am ready to enter at large on the subjects here alluded to, or on other Catholic doctrines, with any of my recent Parishioners who may think it worth while to confer with me. I cannot but still feel the deepest interest in their welfare; and should a single individual among them, from a deference towards myself or gratitude for former comfort or counsel, be induced to read what I have written dispassionately, and through it be brought to a knowledge of the truth, I shall thank God to the day of my death for His unspeakable mercy.

As an answer to the innumerable reports, and insinuations, and surmises, which have been industriously circulated to account for my conversion, I append an extract from the *Dublin Review* of June, 1846. It saves me from the pain of further egotism.

“ Would that others had confined themselves to this—we will not say kind and gentle, but—*equitable* tone in their reproofs; we speak not of one person or another, but of the generality of those who have felt it a duty to animadvert on recent converts to the Catholic Church, We are not here crying for mercy, but asking for justice, demanding common English fairness; we have a right to expect, but we do not find, that considerate, compassionate, comprehensive judgment upon their conduct which, instead of fixing on particular isolated points in it, views it as a whole—uses the good, which is its general character, to hide its incidental faults—makes one part explain another, what

is strong here excuse what is weak there, and evident sincerity of intention atone for infirmity of performance—which has a regard to circumstances, to the trial of an almost necessary excitement, the necessity of acting without precedent, and of reaching a certain object when each assignable path has its difficulties. We are not apologizing for their great and momentous decision, but for the peculiarities which have accompanied its execution. If to do as much as this be considered, after all, asking for mercy not for equity, it is only such mercy, to say the least, as they, as well as the subjects of their censures, will require on a day to come. And we, on our part, will show to these objectors so much consideration, as to allow that they do not pass their censures wantonly. We do not hold them justified in those censures, but we are able to enter into the feelings under which they pass them. Such censures are necessary for their position. When men of education, of good abilities, of blameless lives, make great sacrifices, give up their place in society, their friends, and their means of living, in order to join another communion, it is a strong argument, as far as any single argument is strong, for that communion's claim on the dutiful regard of Christians generally. And in the instances before us the argument came with particular cogency to those persons, and they were not few, *who were united to the converts by ties of friendship, kindred, or gratitude*. It was impossible that such persons should not be moved by the example thus held out to them ; and, this being the case, there was no saying how far its influence might spread. In consequence, it became very necessary to show, with respect to the seceding parties, that there was something faulty in the mode in which they had severally detached themselves from their original communion—a fault such as to invalidate the testimony of each, and to destroy its logical or rhetorical force. It was a great point to be in a condition to say, that not any one of them but might have acted better than he did ; and, whereas by seceding they had shown no piety towards the Church of England, its doctors, or *its living divines and prelates*, there was no special call for delicacy in dealing with them, and no reason against imputing motives or using personalities. If motives could not be plausibly conjectured, faulty tendencies at least were discoverable in their several characters ; or hypothetical failings were assignable—as restlessness, or flightiness—such as would, if existing,

account for their conduct by what Gibbon calls "human causes"; or, if every thing else failed, words might be cast at them, and they might be accused of "rationalism." Nay, since no man living is perfect, and such critical junctures bring out an individual mind, such as it is, into full play, develop its qualities and faculties, and magnify for the time, as in a lens, even its minutest peculiarities, and represent its faintest shades and colours, we may readily grant that never was there a case of conversion, except under the influence of extraordinary inspiration, which might not have proceeded more holily, more wisely, more religiously than it did—never a case which did not present an opportunity of criticism to those who had the heart, or felt it a necessity, or thought it a duty to criticise.

Good friends, you have not far to seek; *habetis confitentem reum*; he pleads guilty; he has given up a fellowship or a living, or he has forfeited an inheritance, or ruined the prospects or present provision of his wife and children, or damaged his reputation for judgment of discernment; he has cheerfully made himself a scoff, submitted himself as a prey to the newspapers, has made himself strange to his brethren; and besides and amid all this, it is true, he has said a strong word—or uttered a sarcasm—his successive disclaimers have not severely kept time with the growth of his misgivings,—he has spoken to those with whom he should have been reserved, and has been silent where he should have spoken; at times he has not known where he stood, and perhaps promised what he could not perform. Of his sacrifices he thinks and says nothing; what he does know, and does think of, is in substance what you so rhetorically argue against him. What you proclaim to the world, he confesses without grudging, viz., that he has but acted *secundum captum suum*, according to what he is, not as an angel, but as a man; in the process of his conversion he has had to struggle with uncertainty of mind, with the duties of an actual position, with misgivings of its untenableness, with the perplexity of fulfilling many duties and of reconciling conflicting ones. He is not perfect; no one is perfect; not they who accuse him; he could retaliate upon them; he could gratuitously suggest reasons for their retaining their stations, as they can for his relinquishing them; but it would be unworthy of him to do so. He leaves them to that judgment to which he himself ap-

peals. May they who have spoken or written harshly of recent converts to the Catholic Church, receive at the Great Day more lenient measure than they have in this case given !”

ONE word more. Since these pages were written, a letter from the friend alluded to in the pamphlet has appeared in the public newspapers—a letter which has been to me an occasion at once of acute suffering and unfeigned surprise. In speaking himself of private matters, he has compelled *me*, however reluctantly, to speak of them too.

Nearly a year ago, I told the writer of that letter of all my difficulties, and of what even then I believed might be their eventual result. One by one I laid them before him, and begged him to aid me if I was in error. I wrote at large on Catholic subjects, and entreated him to answer what I wrote. I pointed out passages from the Fathers, and implored him to show me how they were to be reconciled with the Anglican system. To all this he never answered one word. He did but shrink from me as from a dangerous person. The Bishop of Sydney *had* answered me, mainly by referring to such divines as *Dr. Jortin*, but I nauseated the blasphemies of that scoffing writer, and—*so did my friend*. I said to the latter, “I am in perplexity; I have had recourse again and again to the Bishop, and you are yourself fully aware that he is not one to whom I can look for guidance in this matter; it is on *you* that I chiefly depend.” His constant reply was, that he had no time for reading on such subjects, that he was entirely unacquainted with Eccle-

siastical History, and with the writings of the Fathers. He *did* help me, it is true, but in a very different way. He withdrew his friendship from me, and so loosened a tie which otherwise I might not have had strength enough to break. He had more influence over me than any other man in the world, and doubtless it was mercifully removed by the allwise Providence of God. It will be seen from this that the virulence he has recently manifested against the Catholic Church arises from no research, but solely from prejudice ; or, as he himself says, “ from the phases in which, just now, Romanism is showing itself.” The philosophers of old, as Seneca and Pliny, judged of *Christianity* by its “ phase,” and so died heathens. The *Jews* judged of Christianity by its phase. They counted the Lord Jesus a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber. They thought no good thing could come out of Nazareth. On the same principle Protestants do not feel called upon to examine into the real nature of the Catholic Church. “ It is *obviously* corrupt,” they say ; “ it is preposterous to think seriously on such a subject. We have not *time* for investigation, and if we had, we could employ it better.” The writer in the newspaper brought charges against myself as an individual, which were not only false, but without a shadow of foundation. Those which he brought against others I believe, in my conscience, to be equally false, and these falsehoods make up the “ phase of Romanism.” I do hope, then, my readers will suffer me to caution them not to judge of Catholics by the Protestant portrait. *I* so judged

once, and now I see how impossible it was to form a *true* judgment. My Anglican friends know what it was that bound us all so closely together. They will understand, therefore, what I mean, when I say that I have found among Catholics the same healthy tone of mind, the same high standard of honour, the same Christian refinement and delicacy of thought, the same implicit reliance upon the inherent power of truth, the same contempt of mere expediency, which have characterised the earnest men of the High Church school, but all this increased and ennobled, in the highest degree, by the great REALITY, after which Anglicans are but feeling.

That the friend of whom I have been compelled to speak, and all my friends, may soon be brought to a better mind than that which has moved them in all they have said and done of late, is the daily prayer of one whose heart beats with unbounded gratitude to God, for that he has himself been rescued from a sea of trouble, and safely harboured in a home of peace and rest.

Deo Gratias.

EASTER TUESDAY, 1848.

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